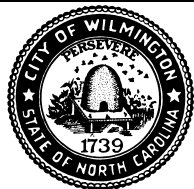




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Wilmington, NC 28402

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Public Information Report

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Jim Quinn, Mayor Pro-Tem
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The Public Information Report is published by the City of Wilmington. Comments or suggestions? Contact us at: 910-341-0833 or send an email to: newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov or mail us: Communications Office, P.O. Box 1810, Wilmington, NC 28402-1810
Looking forward to hearing from you!

The city on the web
www.wilmingtonnc.gov

General Information Phone Numbers

Citizen Services Information 341-7800
Emergency 911
Police/Non-Emergency 343-3600
Fire/Non-Emergency 341-7846
Parks and Recreation 341-7855
Parks Hotline 341-7852
Street Maintenance 341-7879
Parking 762-5678
Zoning 254-0900
Trash pickup/Recycling 341-7875
Stormwater 341-4646
Water and Sewer Billing 341-7806
Code Enforcement 341-3266

City Council Meetings

City Council meetings are generally held on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. and are open to the public. There is time for public information at each Council meeting; interested persons can sign up to speak for up to five minutes by filling out a form at the City Clerk's Office located in City Hall. Requests will be taken until noon the day before the meeting. Meetings are held in City Council Chambers, located on the second floor of City Hall at 102 N. Third Street. Agendas for upcoming meetings are posted on the city web site at www.wilmingtonnc.gov

City Council Meetings on GTV8

Council meetings are broadcast live on GTV8, the City Channel on Timewarner cable. Council meetings are replayed at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the week of the meeting, as well as 11:30 p.m. the following week.

This Week From City Hall

You can catch a summary of City events and activities on GTV8's "This Week From City Hall," airing twice daily at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., beginning the Friday evening after every Council meeting. For questions about programming on GTV8, contact Station Manager Dylan Lee at 341-4675.

GTV8 online

City Council meetings, Planning Commission meetings, "This Week From City Hall," and all other GTV8 programming can be found on the City's website, live or on-demand. From the front page, simply click on "online videos." Then, select the program you want to watch. If you are looking for a particular Council meeting agenda item, you can select the item from a drop-down menu after choosing your desired meeting date. You can also do a keyword search for the item. Windows Media Player version 9 or higher is required.

Look for the  for information

CITY OF WILMINGTON NORTH CAROLINA

City of Wilmington Public Information Report

SPRING 2008
Volume 5 Number 2

Inside this Issue:

- Parks Bond Update
- Civilian Traffic Officers
- Citizens Survey
- Water Drought Update
- Budget Shortfall
- Trash and recycling

Special Insert:

*Stormwater Services
2006-07 Surface Water
Quality Report*

About the drought...

The state of North Carolina is experiencing its worst drought in history, and Wilmington is experiencing its driest year since 1931.

Even after recent rainfalls, the city's precipitation deficit is still more than 20 inches.

Got a minute?

We'd love to hear from you...
Let us know what you think about the newsletter and what you'd like for us to include in future issues...

Call us or email us at:
910-341-0833
newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov

www.wilmingtonnc.gov

Major sewer repairs near completion

Work to make \$6 million in needed repairs to the Northeast Interceptor (NEI) sewer line is nearing completion. The recent improvements consist of three major projects. The first major project to relocate more than a mile of the NEI, which used to run through Hewlett's Creek, has been completed. The relocated line now runs down Pine Grove Drive, through the Municipal Golf Course, and down Mockingbird Lane and Cascade Drive.



Pine Grove Drive

The second project, which involved upgrading the Hewlett's Creek pump station on Pine Grove Drive and the Bradley Creek Pump Station on Oleander Drive, has also been completed.

Completion of these projects will allow the City to ask the State Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to lift the moratorium on additional hookups to the NEI that has been in place since May of 2007.

The third project involves repairing an almost one-half mile section of the NEI that runs along Greenville Loop Road. After the initial relining work was completed, approximately two-thirds of the work successfully passed the required pressure testing. However, the testing revealed that two segments of relined pipe required additional repairs before they could be put into service. Work is expected to be completed in mid-March.

Although the city hoped to have all the repairs done by the end of February, City Manager

Sterling Cheatham says the pipe will not be placed into service until it is safe to do so. "While we are trying to get these repairs done as quickly as possible, our biggest priority is getting the work done right," said Cheatham.

The completion of these projects will allow the City to ask the State Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to lift the moratorium on additional hookups to the NEI that has been in place since May of 2007. This process is already moving forward.

Additionally, the City plans to replace 1,400 feet of pipe along Independence Boulevard at 17th Street to allow for higher pressure in the pipeline. This repair is not necessary to lift the moratorium, but is being done as a precautionary measure. These future repairs, coupled with the ones already completed, represent a \$40 million investment in the NEI.

For more information, check out the sewer improvements page on the city's website at www.wilmingtonnc.gov.

Sewer System Hotline: (910) 341-7884
City Web Page: www.wilmingtonnc.gov





Traffic investigators on the job

The Wilmington Police Department spends a lot of time responding to traffic accidents. That is why the department recently hired two civilian traffic investigators whose sole task is to respond to and investigate crashes that only involve damage to property.

The two new investigators, Stanley Pollock and Robert Layman, (*photo above*) travel in cars marked "Crash Investigator" that are different from regular police cars.

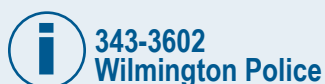
Citizens should still report automobile accidents as they always have, by calling 911.

If the accident involves only property damage, it is likely that a civilian traffic investigator will respond.

According to Sgt. Carl Strawn of the WPD, the program is already benefiting the community. "The benefit is that it frees up the uniformed police officers to deal with more serious issues," said Strawn.

The WPD reminds motorists to drive safely and obey all traffic laws.

Citizens can call 343-3602 for more information.



Parks & open space bond projects

Improvements to parks and facilities continue as the City moves forward with projects funded by the 2007 parks bond. Following is an update on a few of the projects currently underway:

MLK Center

The center has reopened after undergoing \$645,000 in renovations, including a new outside entrance awning, refurbished gym floors and new reception and office areas.



Recreation Manager, Travis Adams at MLK Center

City driest in 76 years

The state of North Carolina is experiencing its worst drought in history, and Wilmington is experiencing its driest year since 1931. Even after recent rainfalls, the city's precipitation deficit is still more than 20 inches.

There is a common misconception that as long as there is water in the Cape Fear River or enough rain, there is plenty of water available to use. While the City does get its water from the Cape Fear River, the water in our area is too salty for consumption. The actual source of our water is located in Chatham County, 130 miles upstream. This means that even if it rains in Wilmington, if Chatham County is dry, the City's water supply is in jeopardy.

Outdoor water use and irrigation accounts for about 70% of all household use.

MarStella Park

Most of the work at the park was completed in January and is now in use. Amenities include a playground and picnic areas, gardens and sidewalks.



MarStella Park playground

Greenfield Amphitheatre

Renovations to the amphitheatre are expected to be complete in late April. They include an expanded cover for the stage, an adjoining stage house with shower and dressing facilities, new concessions and restroom buildings and new landscaping. The first event in the newly renovated facility will be the 16th annual performance of *Shakespeare on the Green*, which will begin in June.

Conservation Hotline:
(910) 341-0114

Email:
conserveh2o@wilmingtonnc.gov

Conservation

The City is following Governor Mike Easley's call to action by asking all residents to conserve water. Outdoor water use and irrigation accounts for about 70 percent of all household use. The remaining 30% is used for everyday indoor water use.

Restrictions

During the spring and summer months, water use goes up dramatically. Activities such as watering lawns and gardens, filling pools and washing cars (except at an approved commercial carwash) will be limited. Although any restrictions do not apply to private wells, the City is urging all residents to limit their usage of water from any source.

For more information on the drought, water conservation efforts and water restrictions, visit the City's website at www.wilmingtonnc.gov and click on the Conservation, Drought, Restrictions link.

Citizens rate city services

According to results from a recent survey, citizens think the City is doing a good job in several areas, and needs to work on some others. This information will be used to help set focus areas for the next three years and to develop funding priorities.

The survey was administered this past fall to a random sampling of residents. The survey is one of the most accurate ways the City has to hear directly from a large number of citizens about what is important to them.

"This gives us valuable insight about what is important to our citizens"

Sterling Cheatham, City Manager

"We thank those citizens who were asked to respond to the survey. This gives us valuable insight about what is important to our citizens, what we are doing well, and areas for improvement," said City Manager Sterling Cheatham.

Survey Highlights

Overall satisfaction generally high

- 58% gave positive ratings for overall quality of city services
- 32% thought the overall quality of services was okay
- Satisfaction with most utility services were above the national average
- Residents generally very satisfied with quality of customer service

Highest levels of satisfaction:

- Fire
- Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste
- Police
- Parks and Recreation

Improvement priorities

- Management of Traffic Flow
- Water and Wastewater Utilities
- Maintenance of Streets/Sidewalks

Construction priorities

- Sewer Improvements – NEI
- Improvements to major streets

Want to see the entire survey?
www.wilmingtonnc.gov

How do you like the newsletter?

The recent survey pointed out that citizens like to receive information about the City from this newsletter.

Please let us know how to make it better. E-mail your comments to www.newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov.

How do you like the newsletter?
email us at newsletter@wilmingtonnc.gov

City faces mid-year budget shortfall

Due to an error by the New Hanover County Tax Office, the City's budget is now short by \$4.2 million. This means the new tax rate set following reevaluation last year was 2.5 cents below the correct amount needed to make it the same level as it was before reevaluation.

The City is taking several steps to make up for this shortfall by the end of the fiscal year in June. Although all critical services such as police and fire service will be maintained, the City has made several

cuts and reductions, including a partial hiring freeze and reducing departmental budgets. No employees have been laid off. City Manager Sterling Cheatham says, "We are tightening our belts as best we can without impacting services to citizens, but this is a significant error that has hampered our ability to operate as needed. We hope to resolve this issue with the development of next year's budget."

City Council will consider this issue as the budget is developed this spring.



Let's get SMART about recycling

The City's recycling program, Separate Materials and Recycle Together (SMART) is a free, voluntary program for collecting recyclable items at curbside. It is provided as part of your trash collection and is picked up on the same day as your regular trash.

- Place your SMART box along with your trash on the curb at 7:30 am
- Remove tops and lids from bottles, jars, and plastic containers and rinse

What Can I Recycle?

- tin food cans
- glass bottles & jars
- aluminum beverage containers
- newspaper
- plastic containers with a neck #1-7
- magazines, brochures, junk mail
- white, colored or computer paper
- paper bags, file folders
- catalogues less than 2 inches thick
- brochures, junk mail, paper bags
- books with soft covers (phone books)
- cardboard boxes flattened
- cereal and food boxes

Sorry, the city does not recycle plastic grocery bags; these bags can be taken to local grocery stores for recycling.

Call 341-7875 for your free SMART box. Your SMART box will be delivered to you absolutely free. So let's get SMART about recycling.

